# Audubon Summer Camp Handbook





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# **Camp Mission & Staff**

# Welcome to the Audubon Society of RI Summer Camp!

Thank you for enrolling your child in our summer camp! We are honored to serve you and your camper(s), and sincerely hope to help your child create wonderful memories of summer camp. The purpose of this handbook is to make sure that you are well informed and prepared to send your children to Audubon camp. If you have any further questions, after reading this handbook, please do not hesitate to contact us.

# **Summer Camp Mission & Goals**

**Mission:** To provide fun, safe, camp programs for children that nurture and foster their connection, understanding, knowledge and respect for nature and the environment.

#### Goals:

An Outstanding Camp is a place where all children feel valued.

- All Staff view each child as a unique individual with something special to offer.
- All Staff show an interest in each child, calling them by name, communicating individually with them and listening to what they have to say.
- All staff help make camp fun and safe throughout the day.

# An Outstanding Camp is a place that is fun and exciting for children.

- Activities are varied to meet a range of interests, abilities and needs.
- Activities invite participation; they are fresh, interactive and inclusive.
- Camp provides children with choices and opportunities for self-expression; and opportunities for supervised free play.
- Staff are enthusiastic, energetic and fun to be around; they are well-prepared and competent.
- Staff create activities that provide more than half of the camp day exploring outside in nature.

# An Outstanding Camp is a safe place

- Campers are well supervised in every situation throughout the camp day.
- Staff are vigilant; they constantly monitor the camp site for safety hazards.
- Safety is a priority, and every activity takes safety into consideration.
- Campers are taught good safety measures as part of the camp routine.

# **About Our Camp Staff**

Audubon Camps are under the direct leadership of the **Camp Director**, **Tracey Hall**. Tracey has been overseeing and teaching the Audubon Society's Summer Camp program for 21 years. Additional support comes from: **Kate Swain**, Assistant Camp Director at our Bristol Camp, **Marina Flannery**, Assistant Camp Director at our Caratunk Camps, **Michelle Solis**, Camp Registrar, **Anne DiMonti**, Director of the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium in Bristol, and **Lauren Parmelee**, Senior Director of Education.

#### Staff Selection Criteria

We select our camp staff based on their experience and how much they care about children and the environment. Several camp staff members are year-round valued members of our environmental education team, and the others are hired on a seasonal basis.

All our staff must pass background checks and receive training in safety, child development and nature studies. All Head Instructors must be 18 years or older, and Assistant Instructors 16 years or older. Both Instructors must submit resumes, be interviewed, with excellent references, and have relevant experience of working with children in a camp setting. We also hire staff that are currently enrolled or have graduated with a degree in Environmental Education, Environmental Science, Education, Wildlife Biology, Conservation, or similar sciences.

Additionally, we hire a few Junior Counselors who are 15 years of age and who are partnered with and directly supervised by an instructor. Our Instructors and Leadership Staff are trained and certified in **First Aid and CPR** by a nationally approved provider.

#### **Our Credentials**

The Audubon Society of RI has been offering our summer camp programs for over 30 years. We are members of the RI Association of Camps (R.I.A.C). Our Caratunk camp in Massachusetts complies with all the regulations set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Health and is licensed by the Seekonk Board of Health.

# Camp Schedule & Things to Know

Camp Schedule		
8:50-9:20	Check-in and Free Play	
9:20-9:45	Circle Time, Songs, Show & Tell	
9:45-12:00	Theme Intro, Snack, Activities, Explorations, Hikes	
12:00-1:00	Lunch and Free Play	
1:00-2:45	Activities, Explorations, Crafts, Animal Visits	
2:45-3:00	Clean up, Songs, Games	
3:00-3:15	Check out /Pick-Up	

#### Camper/Staff Ratio:

The staff-to-camper ratio is typically a maximum of 15 campers: 1 camp instructor & 1 assistant. We often add an extra assistant or Junior Counselor to help with our younger campers.

#### **Free Play Time:**

The Audubon Society of RI believes in the importance of free outdoor play. Campers are given time every day to enjoy supervised, creative, free play (materials for games and activities are provided). Play areas include shady spaces and if it is raining, campers have indoor play or a special treat, group activities, or a nature movie.

# **Camp Facebook Page and Daily Highlights from Camp:**

If you would like to see photos of some of the fun activities your campers are doing during their camp week, we post photos throughout the week. Please **like** our Facebook page: **Audubon summer camps**, **and the Audubon Society of RI on Instagram**.

# **Camp Scholarship/ Financial Aid:**

We offer generous financial aid for all who need assistance, and we encourage all to apply. You can apply by filling out an application online. Please refer to our website for more information on camp scholarships.

#### Rainy Days/ Hot Weather:

It is important to provide your camper with a raincoat for the week. Light rain or mist is not enough to keep campers indoors. Heavy rain, thunder and lightning will keep us inside until it clears up. Additionally, ozone alert days or exceptionally hot temperatures may warrant staying inside for the safety of all.

# **Water Games/ Shore/ Stream Exploration:**

On hot days at our Nature Center camps in Bristol we cool off at the shore. Campers are allowed to go up to their knees and cool off as they look for life in the tidal zone. At our Caratunk camps, campers hang out and explore the stream under the shady pine grove. Additionally, we play water games like Drip, Drip, Splash and hold all camp water Olympics on hot afternoons. There are also sprinklers available at both camp locations.

#### Think and Act Green:

At our Audubon camps we stress the importance of reducing waste, recycling and composting. At our Bristol camps, there are compost bins, and the finished compost is used in our gardens. We encourage parents to reduce disposable waste, use reusable, recyclable containers, utensils, and preferably no straws. At Caratunk camps, we have no curbside recycling pick-up. At both camp locations, campers will be asked to carry-in/carry out to help reduce waste.

#### **Special Camp Days:**

Each session will have special large group activities and/or dress-up days, e.g., *Funny Hat Day* or *Superhero Day*. All camp activities might include skits and songs, Capture the Flag, predator/prey games, tie dyeing, watching a play, animal presentations and more!

# **Communication & Arrival/Departure**

# Phone Number to call when your child is at either our Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium camps or Caratunk camps:

Please call **401-949-5454 x 3118** for the front desk; and leave a message if no one picks up. The answering machine is checked regularly.

## Please let us know if your child is:

- Staying home
- Going to be late! (after 9:20 am)
- Needs to be picked up early

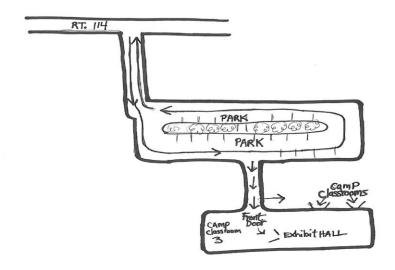
#### Locations:

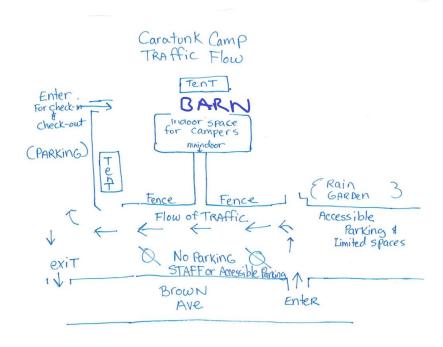
- The Audubon Nature Center & Aquarium is located at: 1401 Hope St., Bristol, RI
- Caratunk Camp (CK) is located at: 301 Brown Avenue, Seekonk, MA

# **Arrival and Departure**

**Check In/Check Out:** Campers may be checked in between 8:50 and 9:20 am daily to give families a flexible start to their day. Please drive slowly and stay alert for kids, wildlife and vehicles. The parking lots are one-way. Please Park your car in an appropriate space. An adult must always escort their camper(s) for both pick-up and drop off.

# Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium





Caratunk

# Pick-Up:

Camper pick-up is from 3:00 – 3:15 pm. The **exceptions** are the **Marine Biology camp** and **Traveling Naturalists camp** has a Friday late-day pick up at 5:00 pm, at the Bristol Ferry dock. At our Caratunk Camp for **Outdoor Adventures**, there is a special night program on Friday. That Friday **only**, the check-in is 3:00 – 3:15 pm and the pick-up is **9:00 - 9:15 pm**.

**Photo ID: Campers** are released only to those persons listed on the pick-up authorization list that you filled out at registration. Every new person must show a photo ID. Please bring your ID with you every day and let all the people on your pick- up list know they will be required to show ID when they pick up a camper.

**Early Pick-up: Please** notify your instructor at least a day in advance of any schedule changes, so that staff can make the arrangements to escort your camper to you on time. Your camper may be out on the trails, so please allow time to wait for us to get your camper back to the building for checking out.

**Late Pick-up: Please** call us if you are going to be late. We understand sometimes circumstances beyond your control may cause you to be late but ask that you please follow the camp check out time each day.

**Absent Camper:** If your child will be absent, please leave a message at the Nature Center and Aquarium, please call 401-949-5454 x 3118 for the front desk. Calls will be relayed to the camp instructors at Caratunk as well. Please leave a message as to camper's name, camp session name and camp location (Bristol or Seekonk). There are no refunds or make-up days for camp days missed. If your camper misses a lot of camp due to an illness or emergency and there is an opening in another camp for their age group, we will be happy to move that child into that camp, but this is a courtesy and not a guarantee.

# What to Wear & What to Bring

#### What to Wear:

Campers should dress according to the weather. Most of the camp day is spent outdoors with hikes and active games. It is strongly recommended that campers wear

shorts and short sleeve shirts on hot days, sneakers or sturdy shoes, non-aerosol insect repellent, and a hat and sunscreen for sun protection.

Note: Please label all items! Lost and Found Items are placed in a bin and held until the end of the camp season.

# What to Bring:

Camp Lunches and Snacks: Full-day Campers should bring a snack, water bottle and lunch; Half-day Campers should bring a snack and a water bottle (no lunch).

Lunches and snacks are used as educational tools to teach campers how to reduce waste. Audubon has a carry-in carry-out policy. This requires visitors (individuals, school groups and summer camp participants) to take home all containers, wrappers and waste. It is suggested that campers bring lunches, snacks and drinks in an insulated bag or small cooler. Suggestions for reusable containers: lunch/snack - washable cloth bag or lunch box; napkin - washcloth or bandana; sandwich - plastic container with lid; drink - reusable plastic bottle or thermos. Thank you for your help!

# You are welcome to leave these items at camp all week...

- Hat
- Towel
- Swimsuit (for sprinkler and days at the shore)
- Sunscreen
- Non-Aerosol insect repellent

- Extra pair of Socks
- Old, T-Shirt for messy craft projects
- Jacket/sweatshirt
- Raincoat (as needed)
- Water Bottle (labeled)

Old sneakers or water shoes for Aquatic studies (Please do not use or bring crocs, or flip flops as these are loose fitting, not sturdy, do not stay on feet, and can cause blisters.)

#### MEDICATION AT CAMP: Prescribed and Over the Counter

If your child is taking prescribed medication to camp, it must be in its original container with the pharmacy label, and you must personally hand the medication to the camp instructor. Over-the-counter products must be in original packaging. In the **Bristol** location, you will need to fill out the "Authorization to Administer Medication" form for both prescribed and over the counter products and submit it to Audubon when bringing the medication to camp.

**Caratunk Camp** in Seekonk, has a separate authorization form that we will send to you **prior** to camp to fill out/sign off and return to us **prior** to camp. We have our Heath Care consultant approve and sign off the medication to comply with Massachusetts Board of Health Regulations.

#### WHAT NOT TO BRING:

Pocketknives, matches, firearms, fireworks or weapons of any kind are prohibited. We ask that campers leave radios, gum, electronic games, cell phones, tablets or iPod, toys, pets and any items of value at home. We also ask that campers do not wear *Crocs or flip flops* as they do not perform well on uneven terrain. The Audubon Society of RI is not responsible for lost or damaged articles that have been brought to camp. The possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited. The recreational use of marijuana, by campers or staff, in any form is prohibited at recreational camps for children during all hours of operation.

# What to Expect on your First Day

# **Transition/Separation**

A child's first day at camp may cause some separation anxiety for both the parent and the child. It would be very helpful to prepare your child for this separation by discussing in advance the schedule of a typical camp day. Let your camper know what to expect and that everything will be fine. Emphasize all the fun they will have at camp and that you cannot wait to hear all about it, and hugs, kisses goodbye and then...leave. If you stick around, it will usually spur on more tears, for both you and your camper, and that may make it harder for your camper to adjust. Most often the tears stop very soon after you leave. Our staff is well trained to help campers who are struggling with separation. We do ask that you do not stick around while your child is at camp. If your camper is struggling, we will be happy to contact you to update you, and we also welcome you to contact the camp via phone for an update of how your child is doing during the day.

# What to do and where to go?

Please follow the traffic parking procedures as outlined. At the Audubon Nature Center and Aquarium and at our Caratunk camps signs will direct you to check-in/check-out locations.

 Notes: Currently, we will be checking campers in and out outside at tents at both locations, unless otherwise directed to check-in/check-out indoors due to weather. All campers, counselors – in – training, junior counselors, and staff under 18
must be signed out of camp each day by an authorized Parent or Guardian.

# Please allow for a longer check in time on the first day of camp:

- You will need to bring any medications and an ID.
- You will need to check your pick-up authorization list and make sure it is accurate and up to date.
- The instructor may have questions for you, and you may have questions or things to share with them.
- You may need to sign forms or permission slips for things like special camp treats, etc.
- Instructors and Assistants will show your camper to their cubby and get them settled into an activity, but once you have them checked in feel free to help your camper get oriented and put things away in cubbies.
- Please help us by pre-applying sunscreen or insect repellent. We always take time to reapply, if necessary, but it helps us with transitions if it is already done.

# **Camper Check in/Arrival Activities:**

Campers can expect to make name tags on the first day, work on a fun craft, color or draw, play with puzzles, work on a mystery, read books or have some free time outside to play, as we wait for everyone to arrive.

On the first day, after everyone has checked in, the instructor will lead some "getting to know you" games and name games. They will also go over Camp Behavior and Safety Rules, including what to do in an emergency, such as a fire. At the beginning of every camp day, Instructors will go over the day's schedule and lead a group activity such as songs, games or "meet an animal".

# **Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policy**

Our primary concern at the Audubon Society of Rhode Island is to provide a safe, nurturing and stimulating environments for all the children, all the time. Due to the outdoor and exploratory nature of our camp programs, campers must be able to move about on uneven terrain. Campers are expected to participate meaningfully in age-appropriate activities, with emphasis on nature studies. All campers are expected to follow stated behavior and safety rules as outlined by their instructors. Our behavior

expectations and safety rules have been developed to ensure the safety of campers and to show respect for self, others and the environment. Campers are made aware of these rules on the first day of the session.

#1 Rule: At ASRI, we have a Zero Tolerance Policy for any form of bullying. There will be no hurting of others, or intention to hurt others, either verbally, physically, or emotionally. If you believe your child is a victim of bullying, please reach out immediately to the Camp Director or Assistant Camp Directors. Once we are aware of any bullying, we will engage in appropriate actions to stop the bullying immediately. Please call (401) 949-5454 x 3014 to speak with the Camp Director.

## **Safety Rules:**

- 1. Always stay with group
- 2. If called, stop and answer.
- 3. Be kind and courteous to all creatures.
- 4. Follow the behavior expectations as outlined by your leaders and your group. Example: "Sticks and rocks remain on the ground."
- 5. Rules for our Wildlife Refuges: Do no harm, leave no trace, Take no prisoners

**Please Note-** At any point during the week, the Camp Director reserves the right to dismiss a camper when in her judgment the camper's behavior interferes with the rights of others, the smooth functioning of the group or activities in the group or violates the camps behavior policy. **In such cases no refunds will be given.** 

# **Discipline Policy:**

Infringements of the behavior expectations and safety rules bring fair and obvious consequences. Staff will follow a series of steps: one—on—one discussion, time—out from activities, and time with Camp Director or other Camp Leadership Staff. The child may be asked to apologize. If a child acts in an unsafe manner that is physically harmful to self or others, staff will remove the child from danger and bring them to the Camp Director. If it is a serious and/or constant issue the camper will be dismissed from camp without monetary compensation.

Corporal punishment will never be used; no camper will be subjected to cruel or severe punishment; humiliation or verbal abuse; no camper will be denied food as punishment, and no camper will be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Step 1: If there is an incident, the parent will be informed. We will work together to determine the cause and the solution.

Step 2: If there are two incidents, a parent/child or guardian/child meeting will be held with the Camp Director. A Behavior Agreement Contract will be filled out with the child/Instructor/Camp Director and Parent/Guardian.

Step 3: If the behavior cannot be changed or controlled within a reasonable amount of time, the child will be dismissed. There will be no refund. The Program Director will be the sole judge of what constitutes a reasonable length of time.

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island's Behavior Policy represents our best effort to protect children with behavioral problems, their families, other children and our staff.

## **Health and Wellness**

# **Healthcare and Healthcare Consultant**

The Audubon Society has an offsite Healthcare Consultant that we have been using for over 15 years. All our Instructors and Leadership staff such as Directors are trained and certified in First aid and CPR by an approved provider. Emergency numbers are listed next to all our phones, and all staff are trained in healthcare and emergency procedures as part of their camp training orientation.

# Illness or Injury

Our Policy stipulates that you do not send your child to camp if exhibiting any of the following symptoms: Fever of 100 degrees or more, pink eye, Severe Headache, Ringworm, Lice, Severe/persistent coughing, Sore Throat, Vomiting, Other Contagious Illness. We reserve the right to refuse a camper from attending camp if they have any of those symptoms. Should a camper be showing any of those symptoms during camp we will contact you immediately to pick up your child. We provide a supervised quiet area for campers that are not feeling well to rest while waiting for pick-up. \* A doctor's note must be provided before campers with signs of contagious illnesses or lice can return to camp.

If your child has a foot or leg injury, you must speak to the Camp Director who will determine if accommodation can be arranged and when he/she can return to camp.

#### **CAMPER INFORMATION & SPECIAL NEEDS**

Help us provide the best experience for your child at our camps, by informing us of **any and all** special considerations prior to your child's first day at camp. This may include information on allergies, accessibility concerns, behavioral, psychological or emotional conditions, or other special needs. When you entrust your child to our care, we are sure you do it with one thing uppermost in your mind -- that your camper(s) have the safest, happiest experience with us possible. Once you share the information with us, our promise is to share it only with the people who will have direct contact with your child.

Many of our activities can be modified for full participation by all. If your child has an official diagnosed special need(s) and usually has an Aide at school, then you must provide an Aide to assist your child at camp. If your child displays behaviors or sensory processing issues that cause a significant need for one-on-one attention, then you need to provide an Aide to accompany your child at camp.

Please note that all children that display behaviors that are causing physical or emotional harm to themselves or others at camp, or are consistently disruptive, may be dismissed from camp temporarily or permanently. These behaviors include, but are not limited to hitting, kicking, biting, throwing objects, screaming, refusal to eat or participate regularly in activities, use of profanity, or verbal threats of harm.

#### **Diabetes and Epi-Pens**

Children with diabetes or other conditions that require medical injections are more than welcome to attend Audubon camps. Please note however, that Audubon staff are not qualified to provide injections to campers and Audubon does not have a nurse on staff. Our camp staff are First Aid and CPR certified, trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of hypo or hyperglycemia, and know how to administer a prescribed epinephrine –pen in an emergency.

If you allow your child to self-inject medication, please let us know. We are happy to provide privacy, access to a phone to speak with you at any time, and supervision while your child administers their medication. If you would prefer to come to camp to administer medication just let us know. We do require a note from a physician, as well as Parent/Guardian authorization for all medications, and ask for information and instructions specific to your child. We will always work with you to accommodate your child's specific needs to the best of our abilities and scope of practice.

#### **Required Health Documents**

Campers attending Audubon Camps must comply with Rhode Island and Massachusetts' Regulations. You must provide evidence that your child has had a health examination by licensed medical personnel within **24 months** of camp attendance. A signed note from your child's physician, on the physician's letterhead, will suffice. Additionally, we need the most current copy of your child's immunizations. (Refer to the information below for a list of required immunizations.) **Please provide this information to Audubon's Education Department no later than four weeks before the camp's start date**. Please note; if your child attended camp the previous year, and there has been NO change in their physical exam record or updates in their immunization requirements please call us and we may be able to use last year's records that we have on file.

Mail: Michelle Solis: 1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI. 02809

Fax: (401) 245-9339 Email: msolis@asri.org

# **Required Immunizations**

- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine: At least one dose of MMR vaccine(s) must be administered at or after 12 months of age or there must be proof of laboratory evidence of immunity. A second dose of live, measles containing vaccine is required for all staff and campers.
- Polio Vaccine: At least three doses of either trivalent oral polio vaccine (OPV) or enhanced potency inactivated polio vaccine (e-IPV) are required. If a mixed schedule of polio vaccine is given (IVO and OPV), a total of four doses are required.
- Diphtheria and Tetanus Toxoids and Pertussis Vaccine: At least four doses of DTaP/DTP/DT/Td are required. (The pertussis component is not given to anyone seven years of age or older). A booster dose of tetanus/diphtheria, adult type toxoid (Td) is required if more than ten years have elapsed since the last dose.
- Hepatitis B: All children born on or after January 1, 1992, three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine are required.
- Meningococcal disease and Immunization Education and Information in accordance with M.G.L.c 111, & 219: <a href="https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4210.pdf">https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4210.pdf</a>
- COVID Policies- We require campers and staff to self-attest daily. We will
  continue to follow the RI Department of Health guidelines for schools, and the
  Massachusetts Public Health Department current guidelines.

# Under Rhode Island and Massachusetts Laws, failure to provide this information prohibits your child from attending camp.

Any questions pertaining to immunizations, required by Rhode Island's Law, can be directed to Camp Director Tracey Hall: (401) 949-5454 x3011

Any questions pertaining to immunizations, required by Massachusetts' Law, can be directed to: Massachusetts Regulations Board -- (617) 983-6800

#### Medications

Medications may be dispensed only during summer camp and only if:

- We have written permission from legal guardian
- The medication is in its original labeled container
- Prescribed medications have the pharmacy label
- The medication has not expired

- Caratunk only: We will send you an Authorization form
- **Special Request**: We ask that you refrain from a "**medication vacation**" while your child is attending camp. Camp, like school, requires your children's full attention, and symptom control. Our experience is that continuing your child's medication ensures a more positive, and successful camp experience.

#### **Sun Exposure**

Campers are encouraged to wear wide brimmed hats and sunscreen. Parents should apply sunscreen prior to arrival. Staff will supervise reapplying sunscreen by campers as needed throughout the day and making sure campers keep hats on. Staff will do their best to be vigilant about sun safety; however, we expect parents to apply products before camp and remind their children to be sun safe throughout the day.

#### **Insect Repellent**

Insect repellent can be applied daily and should be applied after applying sunscreen. Please **do not** spray repellent indoors or near other people. \* Note: We need written/verbal permission from a parent or guardian to use a sunscreen or insect repellent on their child that was not provided by parents. (i.e. - If you forgot to send sunscreen or insect repellent with your child, and we do not have written/verbal permission to use other products, then we will not apply a product)

#### Tick Information

At the Audubon Society of RI, we work proactively to minimize the risks of your child being exposed to ticks. Our staff teach our campers to be aware of ticks and make every effort to avoid areas known to have a high number of ticks. We conduct frequent tick checks throughout the day. In addition, we strongly urge parents to do a tick check when at home, from the top of the head to feet, and between toes.

According to our Health Care Consultant, as well as the latest research, it usually takes a tick 24 hours to attach itself to a person. If a tick is not deeply attached, we can remove it. If an embedded tick is found on a camper, our staff will contact a parent or guardian immediately to decide on the best course of action for removal of that tick. A deeply embedded tick would be out of our scope of practice to remove and may require a parent or guardian to step in and remove it. It is possible for an infected tick to be embedded up to 48 hours before transmitting a disease. Prompt tick removal is the best course of action for preventing disease transmission. For more information about ticks and tick prevention visit: <a href="https://www.tickencounter.org">www.tickencounter.org</a>

#### **Nut Allergies**

Please let us know if your child has a severe nut allergy of any kind, and the level of sensitivity before the first day of camp. We will designate a nut free table or area for your child, and for other campers or staff to be in compliance. If your campers' nut allergy requires us to ask other campers and staff to not bring in, or ingest certain foods that week, we need to have a thorough list of what foods are prohibited for that camp week. We need this information at least 3 weeks before the start of camp in order to contact parents.

## **Toilet Training Policy**

We request that all campers attending camp without a parent or guardian be fully toilet trained, and able to fully use the bathroom without assistance.

Due to the nature of an outdoor camp, and being away from the building, campers need to use the bathrooms when directed. Staff always bring the groups to use the indoor toilets before long walks or extended activities, and anytime campers need to use the bathroom.

We fully understand that accidents can happen. Campers who have accidents are never reprimanded or punished. A staff member will help the child clean up, but for group activities it is best that campers can handle using a toilet and hand washing without constant help.

Please inform us if your child is struggling with toilet issues due to medical or behavioral issues.

We appreciate you taking the time to read this handbook! Please contact the Camp Director if you have any questions. (401) 949-5454 x 3011